



SULA PERSONATA, *Gould.*

Masked Gannet.

Sula personata, Gould in Proc. of Zool. Soc., February 24, 1846.

IN the course of the present work I have had frequent occasion to mention in terms of praise the great assistance rendered to myself and to the cause of Ornithological science by the officers of H.M.S. Beagle, under the command of my friend Captain Stokes; and I have now the pleasure of placing on record the services also rendered to me by the officers of H.M.S. Fly, under the command of Captain Blackwood, to whose investigations, while engaged in surveying Torres' Straits, but more particularly to those of Lieut. J. M. R. Ince, we are indebted for our knowledge of the fine Gannet here represented, as well as for several other interesting species.

The Masked Gannet was found breeding in considerable numbers on Raines Island: the egg, which is rather lengthened in form, is two inches and five-eighths long by one inch and three-quarters broad, and of a dirty white, stained or clouded all over with reddish brown.

I did not succeed in procuring examples of this bird during my own-researches in Australia, but I believe that it once came under my observation on my voyage from Hobart Town to Sydney, when on approaching Sydney Heads my attention was attracted by the darkly coloured face of a Gannet, showing very conspicuously as the bird flew round the ship, but unfortunately at too great a distance for a successful shot.

The whole of the plumage of both sexes is pure white, with the exception of the greater wing-coverts, primaries, secondaries, tertiaries, the tips of the two central and the whole of the lateral tail-feathers, which are of a rich chocolate-brown; irides yellow; naked skin of the face and chin in specimen dull bluish black; legs greenish blue.

The Plate represents a male about one-third less than the natural size.